

some steep, exposed sections. The east summit was reached at 10:15 A.M. and the bivouac regained at 1:30 P.M. The next day they descended the buttress, mostly by abseil. (The central summit is about of equal height and is separated from the east summit by a difficult, gendarmed ridge that dips 1000 feet.) On the 16th Everett and I had to leave Base Camp to return home. Richardson and Harrop went back up. Bad weather again intervened and they had to sit out four nights at Super Advance Base. The rock-and-ice buttress was climbed on the fifth day by a slightly different line in dubious weather, but the next day, September 21, they had perfect weather and went to the summit. Richardson and Barrett climbed on September 24 and 25 the rock summit behind Base Camp, a peak just a bit less than 5000 meters (16,404 feet). They followed the dihedral line on the east face.

JOHN WILKINSON, *Oxford University Mountaineering Club*

*Ski Traverse of Northern India from Srinagar to Manali.* From February 27 to March 30 Norwegians Odd Eliassen and Erik Boehlke and I made a 600-km journey on skis from Srinagar in Kashmir through Ladakh, Zaskar and Lahoul to Manali. Our commitment dictated a summer visit in 1980 to the area to place our dumps of food, fuel and spare equipment. This would also serve to confirm the actual route we were to ski and the high passes we were to cross. Our route was agreed as Srinagar, Sonamarg, Zoji La (11,500 feet), Dras, Umla La (14,450 feet), Sankho, Ringdom Gompa, Pensi La (15,100 feet), Padum, Tema Shah Nala, Kang La (18,375 feet), Miyar Nala, Udaipur, Tandi, Rohtang Pass (13,125 feet) and Manali. We decided that the end of February would provide the most settled time in Kashmir for our start and that as we progressed southeastwards it would get warmer and good snow conditions would prevail. Thus we got a taxi in Srinagar on February 27 to take us to near Gund where at 7200 feet lay the lowest snow to allow us to ski. Such heavy snow fell before we reached the Zoji La that because of avalanche danger we decided to get round this particular obstacle by returning to Srinagar, flying to Leh and getting a jeep to take us to a point near Dras, about 60 kms from the other side of the pass. On March 11 we set off on our first day of proper skiing, passing Nun and Kun at the bend of the Suru valley. On the evening of March 15 we arrived at Ringdom Gompa, where we had a dump of food and fuel, despite appalling snow conditions in the 100 kms. On March 16 we skied over the Pensi La and had our first stretch of downhill skiing onto the Durung Drung Glacier on better snow conditions. Regrettably, having lost a little height, we were back on bad snow, which continued all the way to our big dump at Padum, which we reached at lunchtime on March 19. Beyond, the snow was worse than any one of us could remember. You would break through the

thin crust, which suddenly collapsed, and you would sink up to your thigh in sugar. We gained height all day on March 21, progressing up the Tema Shah Nala until we turned off the main valley to strike up a glacier which leads to the Kang La. We crossed the pass (5600 meters, 18,375 feet) at noon on March 22. Ahead and below lay the Miyar Nala, the top of which is a magnificent amphitheatre of peaks rising to 6400 meters. For 80 kms gravity would take us from there to 2600 meters (8530 feet). We covered 35 kms on March 23 and it was the most exhilarating skiing I have ever experienced. We covered the same distance on March 24 with gravity doing much of the work for us. At the tiny village of Khanjar, the highest in the *nala*, the people took to their heels, having never seen skis before. We skied down through juniper forest, past little villages and isolated houses, past Gumba to our last dump at Karpat. We were able to ski down to Shakoli, which guards the entrance to the final gorge of the Miyar Nala, but had to walk down this impressive gorge for eight kms to Udaipur because it was too steep and dangerous to ski. By noon of March 28 we had covered the 110 kms to the top of the Rohtang Pass and all that remained of our journey was a 6500-foot descent to Manali.

J.M. GUY SHERIDAN, *England*

*White Needle, on Artificial Legs, and Nun.* In 1946 Major R. Berry, Captain Ralph James and Major Tom Stobart attempted to make the first ascent of Nun (7135 meters, 23,410 feet) via the east ridge. They climbed the White Needle (6550 meters, 21,490 feet) on the way but were unable to reach the main summit. In May, 1981 Major Berry's eldest son, Steve, led a team in his father's footsteps. Amongst the seven were Richard Berry, Steve's brother, and Norman Croucher. Despite having two artificial legs below the knee, Croucher has climbed amongst others the Matterhorn, Eiger, Mont Blanc and Huascarán. Despite poor weather, John Margesson and Croucher reached the summit of the White Needle on June 12. Subsequently all the rest of us had to traverse this peak to reach Camp II. The first summit team on Nun of Steven Monks and Damian Carroll climbed the east ridge, traversed onto the south face to avoid a difficult section of pinnacles and cornices (the Japanese route of 1978) and reached the summit on June 16 after two bivouacs. The two Berrys repeated the route on June 19. During the third group's attempt, after a bivouac at 22,000 feet, Croucher dropped out to give Margesson and me a better chance of making the summit, as the weather was very poor. It was a heartrending and courageous decision. As a result Margesson and I reached the summit on June 22 after another bivouac at 23,000 feet. This was probably the second ascent of the east ridge and was done alpine-style. We had no porters above Base Camp. We attempted to make the second